Japanese help for the development of Desert in Rajasthan

*39. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the expenditure of Rs. 2.69 crores was a meagre allocation for the project for afforestation and pasture development along Indira Gandhi Canal area in Rajasthan to arrest the wind erosion whose original cost is Rs. 107.5 crores for the period of five years;

(b) if so, in what manner Government propose to finance this project in proportion to the estimated cost so as to complete the project as per schedule; and

(c) what would be the expected increase in agricultural production in the deserts of Rajasthan after the completion of the project?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI BALRAM JAKHAR): (a) and (b) The Government of Rajasthan has stepped up the outlay under the project for Afforestation and Pesture Development taken up with the assistance of Oversees Economic Cooperation Fund Japan in the year 1991-92 to Rs. 9.50 crores. The State Government has proposed a total outlay of Rs. 103 crores during the 8th Plan commencing from 1st April, 1992.

(c) Afforestation and Pasture Development can be expected to minimise wind erosion and thereby prevent choking of canals, removal of fertile top soil from fields and lead to enhanced bio-mass production. These would promote improvements in both crop production and the animal husbandry sector.

Damages caused by earthquake in hill areas of Uttar Pradesh

*40. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA:

DR. RATNAKAR PANDEY:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have sent any study team with a view to assess the damage to life and property caused due to recent earthquake in Garhwal region;

(b) if so, what are the details the report submitted by the study team;

(c) whether it is a fact that a large number of persons had died in the hills of U.P. due to delay in providing relief;

(d) if so, the reasons for the delay in providing the relief; and

(e) whether any long term strategy has been formulated for the reconstruction of the earthquake ravaged area, including development of quake proof houses; if so, what are the broad features thereof?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI BALRAM JAKHAR): (a) and (b) A team of senior officers of the Central Government Departments was deputed on 21st October, 1991 to have the first hand information about the impact of the earthquaqe, relief measures being undertaken by the State Government and the immediate assistance required by the State Government to meet the situation. The report submitted by the Central Team was preliminary in nature. The team besides indicating the preliminary estimate of damage suggested immediate assistance to be provided for repair of damaged roads, tale-communications and power systems.

(c) The Government has not received any such report.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) This aspect of development including quake-proof houses has been well taken care of in the scheme of reconstruction of houses for which house subsidy is being given to the affected families.

Renovation of Vigyan Bhawan

106. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA: Will the Minister of URBAN DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that renovation work is being carried out at present in Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi;

(b) the number of times renovation work has been carried there so far and the expenditure incurred on each occasion;

(c) whether it is a fact that at present renovation work has been entrusted to a single consultancy group without following the prescribed procedure; and

(d) if so, what are are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): (a) Renovation work is being carried out in Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi.

(b) Requisite information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha.

(c) and (d) Consultancy for renovation work has been entrusted to a firm. Open competitive offers were called and the work was awarded after deliberation and careful scrutiny by a Committee.

Theft of MTNL equipment

107. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that cases of theft of M.T.N.L. equipment are on the increase in and around the Capital;

(b) the number of such cases detected during the last three years, year-wise;

(c) the extent of loss incurred as a result of those thefts during the above period;

(d) whether Government have identified the theft-prone areas; and

(e) if so, what are the steps being taken to check the recurring thefts?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI P. V. RANGAYYA NAIDU): (a) Yes Sir, MTNL equipment and underground cables are being frequently stolen in the capital affecting telephone services.

(b) and (c) The details are given in the statement. (*See* below)

(d) Sir, these thefts are spread all over Delhi, worst affected areas being South and East Delhi.

(e) Measures like double locking of manhole covers on duct routes laying of cables in concrete on open culverts, and external chain and lock arrangement on PCM repeater cabinets have already been, undertaken Close coordination with Delhi Police Authorities is also being maintained.